

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Chief Joey Merrill
Chief of Police
Vidalia Police Department
202 Vernon Stevens Boulevard
Vidalia, Louisiana 71373

**Re: Louisiana Board of Ethics
Docket No. 2020-782**

Dear Chief Merrill:

The Louisiana Board of Ethics ("Board"), at its December 4, 2020 meeting, considered your request for an advisory opinion as to whether the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics ("Code") would prohibit the Vidalia Police Department ("VPD") from accepting monetary donations from the Riverpark Medical Center to be used as you see fit.

FACTS PROVIDED

You stated that the Riverpark Medical Center would like to make a monetary donation to the VPD. You have requested an advisory opinion as to whether: 1) the VPD can accept the donation; 2) there any restrictions on the use of donations to the VPD; 3) VPD can use the donations to purchase flower arrangements and food trays for the funerals of deceased Vidalia residents; and, 4) the VPD would be allowed to deposit donation funds into a VPD checking account.

CONCLUSION

The Board concluded, and instructed me to inform you, that based on the facts presented, the Code would not prohibit the VPD from accepting monetary donations from Riverpark Medical Center. Additionally, the Code does not place any restrictions on how the VPD can use the donation funds. However, the Code does not dictate where the VPD can deposit those donation funds.

This advisory opinion is based solely on the facts as set forth herein. Changes to the facts as presented may result in a different application of the provisions of the Code of Governmental Ethics. The Board issues no opinion as to past conduct or as to laws other than the Code of Governmental Ethics, the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act, the Lobbyist Disclosure Act, and

conflict of interest provisions in the gaming laws. If you have any questions, please contact me at (800) 842-6630 or (225) 219-5600.

Sincerely,
LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS

LaToya D. Jordan
For the Board

DISCLAIMER
This is a draft opinion and it is **NOT** an opinion of the Louisiana Board of Ethics.
No party may rely on the facts or conclusions. The analysis and conclusions herein are provided for discussion purposes only, and are subject to change or revision at the meeting of the Board of Ethics at which this matter is considered.